

A
DISCOURSE
ON THE
HOLINESS
OF THE

Sabbath-Day.

BEING

A SERMON Preached at Boston,
New-England, October 29th.

1704.

By *Jer. Dummer, k*
A. L. M. and Philosop. Doct.

B O S T O N :

Re-Printed by Edes and Gill, in *Queen-Street*, 1763.

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is called the *Moral Law*. That the determination of the *particular Day* which ought to be Consecrated unto God is not *Moral* but *Positive*, all Christians (*Saturday Sabbatarians* excepted) are agreed. That the Jews were commanded religiously to observe not only *Seventh part of time*, but the *Seventh Day of the Week* precisely, no man questions. It is generally believed that the Patriarchs did so before them. Yet Dr. *Homes* has written a Book, the design whereof is to prove, that the *First day* of the Week was anciently observed as the Day of Solemn Worship before *Israhel's* coming out of *Egypt*. He has many plausible notions, which I find he has borrowed of Mr. *Chafie*, and it is strange that he takes no notice of the Author to whom he was so much beholden. That the *First Day* of the Week ought to be Consecrated to God in Commemoration of the Resurrection and Redemption of our Saviour Christ, is a *positive Precept*. The Scriptures of the Old Testament did predict it. *Psal.* 118. 24. *Ezek.* 43. 27. It is an acute observation of the incomparable *Usher* in his Letter to Dr. *Twiss* (p. 96.) "That the Feast of *Pentecost* did still fall on the day immediately following the ordinary Sabbath. And if God did so order the matter, that in the Celebration of the Feast of Weeks, the *Seventh Day* should purposely be passed over, and that Solemnity should be kept on the *First*; what other thing may we imagine could be presignified thereby, but that under the State of the Gospel, the Solemnity of the Weekly Service should be Celebrated on that day." And the New-Testament confirms the Change of the day. *Job.* 3. 8, 9. *Act.* 20. 7. 1 *Cor.* 16. 2. *Rev.* 1. 10. If the Lord Christ had not commanded the Sanctification of the *First Day* of the Week, and the Scripture revealed it, men by the *Light of Nature* could not have known that to be their duty. *Moral* is used for that which respects the *Manners* of men. A practice which is in its own nature good, is a *Moral Duty*. That which is in its own nature

nature evil, is a *Moral Evil*. That which right reason not blinded by Sin dictates to men as their duty, useth to be called the *Moral Law*. *Moralitas est ordo ille, quem ratio facit in actibus voluntatis, eos disponendo conformiter, vel difformiter ad regulas recte rationis.* Altho' the determination of the *precise day* is *positive*, yet nevertheless it may not be denied but that a *Seventh part of time* ought to be devoted unto God by the *Moral Law*. That Law is contained in the *Ten Commandments*. If we obliterate the *Fourth*, we say there are not *ten* Commandments in the *Moral Law*. The addition of something *Judicial* or *Judaical* to the *Fourth Commandment*, does not take away the morality of it. For by that reason the *Fifth Commandment* would not be moral, because it is confirmed with a promise of *living long* in the Land of *Canaan*. There is no validity in that objection, of the *Gentiles* not knowing that they ought to *Consecrate* a seventh part of Time to their Creator. *Adam's Fall* has dimmed and darkned the Understandings of men. If he had not Sinned, his Posterity would have seen clearly that which now they cannot discern. All the Nations in the World (excepting the Children of *Israel*) lived in gross transgressions of the *Moral Law*, and yet their blind minds were not sensible of the evil they were guilty of. That *Polytheism* which all the *Gentiles* were guilty of, was an high violation of the *First* Commandment. Their worshipping of *Graven Images*, and of *Demans* in them, was against both the *First*, and *Second* Commandment: profane Swearing (which is a breach of the *Third* Commandment) they made no Conscience of. Yea, the most enlightened Philosophers taught things contrary not only to the *First*, but to the *Second Table* of the *Moral Law*. *Aristotle* in his *Ethicks* does so. *Plato* (whom the Ancients cryed up for the best of Philosophers among the *Gentiles*) commends abominable Transgressions of the *Seventh* Commandment. That they had some notions stirring among them about the Sacred-

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ness of the Seventh day, is evident from those Books of theirs which are of the greatest Antiquity. It is very observable that all Nations (except barbarous Indians) have agreed that a *Week* does consist of *seven days*. The Greeks call a Week *Ebdomas*. The Romans, *Septimana*. The Saxons, a *Sennight*. Yea, this notion was *Catholic*. All Nations, in all Ages of the World from time immemorial have made a *Septenary* number of days to be the first period of time. Now if there are *seven days* in a Week, it is very consonant to *right reason*, that one of them should be devoted unto God. Many Testimonies out of the old Poets declaring a sacredness to be in the seventh day, are produced by *Rivet*, and after him by *Dr. Owen*. Nor was it (as by some *Antisabbatarians* has been pretended) only the seventh day of the *Month*, but of the *Week* which they looked on as Sacred. They accounted the day they dedicated to the *Sun*, as a Festival Day, as is testified by *Clemens, Alexandrinus* and by *Eusebius*. There was an Ecclesiastical Decree, that all *Gentiles* that were turned *Christians*, should not Fast on *Sundays* as other *Gentiles* did. All days by them esteemed Sacred, were called *Fasts*, because they did abstain from eating until their Religious Services were ended. It is not probable that the *Gentiles* had their notion of a seventh part of time being holy, from the Books of *Moses*. For they were not extant in the Greek Tongue until *Ptolemy* procured the Translation of the *Seventy*. But the Greek Poets spoke of the Sacredness of the Seventh Day many hundreds of years before that. When as before that Translation they had no light from the Books of *Moses*. It remains then, that it was from some knowledge of the Creation of the World in *Six Days*, and resting on the *Seventh Day*, that the *Gentiles* had a veneration for that day. To this that of *Homer* does wonderfully agree, who does (as after him *Hesiod* did) not only call the Seventh Day *ieron Emar*, but he says, *All things were then finished*. I have wondered at that Verse of his,

Ebdomon

As for the Worthy Author of the Discourse, Emitt'd
 herewith, his Friends have advis'd him to Publish it,
 that so he might vindicate himself from the Calumny
 of being an *Antisabbatarian*; which some have aspersed
 him with. I know not what reason they have for it,
 unless it be from a Latin *Disputation* of his Printed
 when he was in *Holland*; which he wrote for Argu-
 ments sake, and in which there are some passages not
 so cautiously expressed as might have been, yet nothing
 against the *Sanctification* of the *Lord's Day*, but for it.
 This Discourse clears him from being disaffected to the
Holiness of our Christian Sabbath, for which he owns
 that there is a *positive Precept* in the Scripture. Who-
 ever shall assert that, an *Hesitancy* in such an one con-
 cerning the sense of the word *Moral* is no *Herefy*. It
 is well spoken by our famous Dr. Owen, in his Exer-
 citations on the Sabbath. p. 153. If (saith the Doctor)
 it can be proved, that there is a Law binding all men to
 the Observation of an Hebdomadal Sacred Rest, I shall
 not contend with any, how that Law ought to be called,
 whether *Moral* or *Positive*.

I had a great respect for this Ingenious Author, when
 he was a Student in the College. For I observed that
 he was diligent, and by far the best Scholar in the Col-
 lege when he left that Society. His having been
 since that, several years in the *Academies* in *Holland*,
 where he had the happiness of a free Conversation with
 as Learned Men as are in the World, has been very ad-
 vantageous to him. That Man of Renown Dr. *Wit-
 sius* the present Professor of *Theology* in the University
 of *Leyden*, then whom I know not a man on the face of
 the Earth at this Day, more deservedly famous for Learn-
 ing and Piety, after much acquaintance with him, has
 commended his Industry, and blameless Conversation
 during his abode in that Celebrious University, which
 acknowledging his good accomplishments as to Know-
 ledge in *Divinity* as well as in *Philosophy*. And as that
 great

great man declares his hopes concerning him that he will *Crescere in virum Dei*, Increase until he becomes a man of God, so I cannot but have the same hope concerning him. Nor will it be for the honour of *New-England* that one so qualified should for want of due Encouragement, after his return to his Country, be constrained to leave it again. As God has blessed him with an Eminency (considering his years) of Acquired as well as Natural abilities, so I Pray the Lord to go on to bless him, to make and keep him humble, and to give him as an heart, so an Opportunity to use those Talents for the Service of *Christ*, and of his Church.

November, 7th.
1704.

INCREASE MATHER.

When he left that Society, his having been
there that several years in the Academy in Woburn,
where he had the happiness of a free Conversation with
as learned men as in the West, has been very

at London, then whom I know not a man on the face of
in Paris at this Day, more deservedly famous for car-
ing and Pious, after much acquaintance with him, has
commended his industry and blameless Conversation
during his abode in that Celestial City, which
acknowledging his good accomplishments as to know-
ledge in Divinity as well as in Philosophy. And as for

A Discourse on the Holiness OF THE SABBATH-DAY.

EXOD. XX. v. 8.

Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy.

THE Great GOD gave to his People of Old a threefold Law, *Ceremonial*, *Judicial*, and *Moral*, sometimes in Scripture distinguished by the names of *Laws*, *Statutes*, and *Judgments*; The Masters of the Jews indeed tell us of a fourth, which they call the * *Oral Law*, as Sacred as either of the three. This, they say, the Blessed God Communicated to *Moses* on the Mount, and *Moses* to *Joshua*, and *Joshua* to *Eleazer*, and *Eleazer* to the Seventy two Elders, and they handed it down by tradition, 'till it arrived at *Zechariah*, and *Malachi* the two last of the Prophets. But the Christian Church has never yet seen reason to receive this pretended traditionary Law. The other three are on all hands confessed divine. The *Ceremonial* is made up of innumerable Rites and Ceremonies, which were imposed on the Jews, *partly* as a chastisement for their Mutinous behaviour in the Wilderness; *partly* as a restraint to preserve them from running into the Idolatrous Worship of their Neighbours; and *partly* as dark Types, and Adumbrations of the great Redeemer of the World, who was in time to be revealed. The *Forensick*, or *Judicial* Law is a System of Political Precepts for the Civil Government
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of the Jews ; For their Common-wealth was a *Theocracy*, and God was their Sovereign, not only as he is the Sovereign of all Mankind, but he was their Civil, & Military King. Lastly, The *Moral* Law, consisting of ten Commandments, and therefore called the *Decalogue*, was far more considerable than either of the other both for *weight*, and *duration*. It was proclaimed from the top of Mount *Sinai*, in the most terrible and astonishing manner, and was engraven on two Tables of Stone by the immediate Finger of God. My Text is a part of one of these Commands : The *fourth* in order, and the last of the first Table. The *first* Precept of all requires of us an inward veneration of the true God. The *Second* requires the External expression of this inward reverence in the prostration of the body, and other acts of visible Worship. The *Third* commands a further Manifestation of this honour for the Majesty of God in our Words and Discourses, that we presume not at any time to take his awful Name in vain. And now since every thing is beautiful in its season, God has set a part a particular TIME for the more immediate and vigorous exercise of these duties, and those which follow : and that is the SABBATH. *Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.* I pretend not here to a just, and full discourse on the *Sabbath* : But shall only tread the *path*, in which my Text leads me. And therefore find my self Obligated to omit many questions of Considerable importance, which might otherwise have been considered. As that about the Original institution of the *Sabbath* : whether in Paradise, or not 'till after the Fall, or neither the one nor the other, but two thousand four hundred & sixty years after the Creation of the World, and seven days after the raining of Manna. I must also pass over in silence the Causes, and reasons of the Institution of the *Sabbath* ; and withal that great Article in the doctrine of the *Sabbath* : the change of it from the Seventh, to the Eighth day after the Creation of the World, which is the first day of Our Week, The Sum of the Words before us is this.

That

That there is a Weekly Sabbath by the positive Command of God, Religiously and Perpetually to be kept Holy to the Lord.

In Discourſing to the Text I have choſen, this ſhall be my task.

I. To State the true notion and meaning of the Word *Sabbath*.

II. To Enquire into the nature of that *Holineſs* which is aſcribed unto the *Sabbath*, or on what account the *Sabbath* is called *Holy*; and ſo take occaſion to diſcourſe at large to the *Morality* of the *Sabbath*.

III. To Enquire how, and in what manner we are to keep the *Sabbath Holy*. And, *Laſtly*, wherein lyes the importance of this duty implied in that word: *Remember. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.*

I. To State the true notion, and meaning of the Word *Sabbath*. Learned men have aſſigned very ſtrange and different Etymologies of this Word, as they have been led by their various paſſions & int'reſts. *APION* a Learned man, who flouriſhed near two thouſand years ago in Egypt, would fain have made the World believe in his time, that the Word *Sabbath* was not Hebrew, but of a foreign growth, deriv'd forſooth from the Egyptian Word *SABBO*, *inguinum Morbus*, a *Scorbutick diſeaſe in the loyns*, with which he pretends the Jewiſh Nation being generally at that time infected *Pharao*, the King of *Egypt* expelled them out of all his Territories, for fear leaſt the contagion ſhould ſpread among his natural Subjects. And therefore when they had travelled ſix days, they reſted the *Seventh*, and called it *Sabbath*. I might expoſe to you many other ſuch falſe and ludicrous derivations as theſe, but it would be to waſte the time. The word is undoubtedly genuine and proper Hebrew deriv'd from a root, which in that Language primarily ſignifies *Reſt or Ceſſation from labour*, which is evident even to an unlearned eye from the words of the fourth Command: *For in ſix days, &c.*

and he rested the seventh day, wherefore he blessed the Sabbath Day.* Moses uses the phrases: *A resting day*, and a *Sabbath day* synonymously, where by the way we must not imagine the blessed God resting after the manner of men, as having lost spirits, and being tir'd with the toyl of Creating the World, as *Rutilius*, and other Roman Poets scoffed at the Jews. An absurd & blasphemous conceit! No; the Great God is an active & indefatigable being: He can with the same *ease* and *expedition* form myriads of Worlds out of nothing, as one single Atom of Sand: But he *rested*, that is, he *Ceas'd*, he *desisted* from creating the World; Or, He *rested*, that is, he took *delight*, and *complacency* in the works of his hands. And this is the genuine meaning of the Word *Sabbath*, which properly expresses the duty and business of the day. Tho' I find some of the primitive Christians think this word not so proper for the Gospel dispensation, as the Jewish Oeconomy. Not that it should be exchang'd for that planetary name SUNDAY; This sounds too Paganish in a Christian Mouth, but for that divine name, the LORD'S-DAY; Partly because this day was Instituted in memory of our Lord's Resurrection from the Grave, and all the glorious benefits of Redemption; and partly, because the Apostle *John* assigns it that name in his book of Revelations. † But thus much for the Name. I go on —

II. To enquire what that *Holiness* is, which is ascribed unto the *Sabbath*, or on what account the *Sabbath* is called *Holy*. And here in order to resolve this enquiry, it is very convenient that we distinguish the two various acceptations of this word *Holiness* in Scripture.

1. *Holiness* in Scripture very often signifies an *inward principle* of doing every thing *Holily* and Righteously. And sometimes it is applied unto *God*: and then it denotes *privatively*, a perfect and unpolluted freedom from all Sin, and *positively*, an absolute rectitude and purity

* Exod. 20. 11.

† Rev. ch. 1. 7. 10.

of the Divine nature, which inclines him to hate all the workers of iniquity, and to look on Sin with extream abhorrence and detestation. Hence he is stiled the *Holy One*, The *Holy one of Jacob*, The *Holy one of Israel*; and the four Living Creatures, that stand round about his Throne never cease day or night crying to him: *Holy, Holy, Holy*.* This, if there be any comparisons, is the fairest of all the Attributes of God, and the brightest Jewel in his Crown; and therefore he is said to be *glorious in Holiness*.

Again, this *Holiness* is sometimes in a more *lax*, and *improper* sense attributed unto *Angels* and *Men*. And then it intends that image and representation of the Divine Holiness, which is in the Creature: for this is one of the *Communicable Attributes* of God, and is proposed to us for our imitation.

It is written, says the Apostle Peter, *Be ye holy, as I am holy*.† And this I call a *lax*, and *improper* sense of the word; Because nothing is *absolutely*, and *essentially* holy, but the Supreme Being. The Seraphick Angels Cover their Faces in his presence, blushing at their own comparative deformity, and God charges them with *folly*. Nay our immaculate Lord himself as to his meer humane nature seems to disclaim the Appellation of *Good*: *Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God*.‡ However a faint shadow of it there is in the Creature, and it is called *Holiness*. And this is the first acceptation of the Word in Scripture, but cannot be Applied unto the *Sabbath*, because it requires a Rational, intelligent Being for its Subject.

2. *Holy*, or *Holiness* in Scripture does sometimes denote a thing's being separated from a *Common*, or *Profane*, to a *sacred*, and *divine* use. And this holiness belongs to *Things*, *Places*, *Persons*, and *Times*. It belongs to senseless and inanimate *things*. So the robes of the Priests, the instruments, and vessels of the *Temple*, even the *Candlestick*, and *Snuffers* were *holy*. And
whatever

* Rev. 4. 8.

† 1 Pet. 1. 15.

‡ Matt. 10. 18.

whatever was devoted unto God as a Sacrifice was peculiarly so. *If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, &c.**—And it is in this sense the Prophet *Zechariah* must be understood, when he says: *Upon the bells of the horses shall be writ, HOLINESS to the Lord.*†

Again, This holiness is applied unto *Places*. So the Land of *Judea* was peculiarly Sacred unto God above all the Territories of the Earth; and is therefore vulgarly called the *Holy Land*; and the City of *Jerusalem* was still more *Holy* than any other city or village in *Judea*; and *Zion* more *holy* than any other part of *Jerusalem*: *Zion my holy hill, says the Lord*; and the *Temple* yet more *holy* than that; and in the *Temple* the *Atrium Sanctorum* was more *holy* than the *Court* of the *Gentiles*. And Lastly, The *Sanctum Sanctorum* was the holiest of all: and thence its name: *The holy of holy's*. Again, this holiness is ascribed unto *Persons*. So the Jewish Nation were holier than all the Nations of the Earth. *You have I known, says the Lord, above all the People of the Earth.*† And, among the *Israelitish* Nation *Levi* was the Holiest Tribe; and in the Tribe of *Levi* the Priests were holier than the common *Levites*: and among the Priests the *High Priest* was far the holiest of all. Finally, this holiness is ascribed unto *Times* and *Seasons* set apart, and devoted to the Worship of God. And under this head are to be rank'd all those solemn Festivals celebrated of old by the Jews, whether they were Annual, as the Feast of unleavened Bread, Pentecost, the Feast of Tabernacles, the Feast of Trumpets, and the great day of Expiation; or Monthly, as the New-Moons; or Weekly, as the *Sabbath*; On the diligent observation of which the blessed God was pleased to insist more, than on all the other Festivals, which he enjoined them. And thus we see what that *Holiness* is, which is ascribed unto the *Sabbath*, or for what reason the *Sabbath* is called *Holy*, viz. because it is separated from a Com-

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* Hag. 2. 12. † Zech. ult. v. 20 † Deut. 7. 6.

mon and *Prophane*, to a *Sacred* and *Divine* use. We may not allow our selves then in those cares or diversions which are innocent, and laudable on other days. But since God has Sanctified it to himself, therefore we must devote it to his *immediate Service*. And thus far the Jewish, and Christian Church are perfectly agreed, not only with each other, but among themselves. But then there arises here a great question about the *Morality* of the *Sabbath*; i. e. Whether this holiness which is attributed unto the Sabbath, be *Moral holiness*? As to the *Seventh day* precisely in order from the Creation of the World, there is no Dispute among Christians whether that be *Moral*, if you except a handful of *Seventh day-Sabbatarians*; all others agree it is *not*; because our Lord, as we know from his inspired Apostles, actually abolished it, and substituted the *First day* in its room.— *Let no man judge you*, says the great Doctor of the Gentiles, *in respect of an holy day, or of the new Moon, or of the Sabbath-days.** Where the *Holy day* denotes the Annual Feasts, the *New-Moon* the Monthly, and the last, the *Weekly Sabbath*. The Question therefore respects not the *Seventh Day*, but the *Seventh part*, or portion of time, whether that be *not Moral*. Which having always been a famous and celebrated controversy in the Church, deserves our attentive enquiry into the grounds of it. And now to prevent all possible mistakes, and to make the matter obvious to the lowest capacity, I shall advance by slow and leisurely steps, laying down some things Preliminary to the main dispute.

Here then I observe,

1. The word *Moral* is sometimes opposed, and put in contradistinction to *Immoral*; and it is not in this sense of the word that the question is moved, Whether the *Seventh part* of time be *Moral*. *Moral* in this sense signifies Vertuous and conformable to the Divine Law; and so a *Moral Person* is as much as to say a *Just* and a *Righteous* man. *Immoral* on the contrary denotes
Vicious

* Collos. 2. 16.

Vicious and Prophane; and so an *Immoral* Person is a *lewd and dissolute* man. And this is the primary and most obvious signification of the word; however it cannot be in this sense that our question is proposed. As for Example: Tho' it be a *Moral duty* to approach to the Table of our Lord, and a *Moral evil* to neglect it, yet nevertheless the Precept that binds it, is no *Moral Precept* in the sense of our question.

To draw a little nearer,

2. *Moral* is sometimes opposed and put in contradistinction to *Typical* and *Ceremonial*; nor is it in this sense of the word that I intend the question, Whether the *Seventh part* of time be *Moral*. The Jewish Sabbath considered as an external rest and cessation from Labour, was undoubtedly many ways *Typical* and *Ceremonial*: And is therefore called by the Apostle Paul, SKIA TOON MELLONTOON, *A shadow of things to come*. But how the *Seventh part of time* as consecrated for this end, should be *Typical*, and *Ceremonial*, I cannot understand. Tho' 'tis true the reason which some give to prove it not *Ceremonial*, because it was given before *Moses*, is not, I think, very demonstrative. For certain it is that *Circumcision* was instituted above four hundred years before the *Ceremonial Law*, and *Sacrifices* yet earlier, even in the very infancy of the World, and nevertheless nobody doubts but that both the one and the other were *Typical* in the highest degree. However it is to me very Apparent that the *Seventh part of time* as Sanctified by God, is no *Type* or *Ceremony* of any thing to be accomplished by the coming of our Lord in the flesh. If it be, what then is the *substance*, which it is the *shadow* of? and why did it not vanish at the promulgation, or at least the consummation of the Gospel? Whereas it remains now *sacred* and *inviolable*, and must do so as long as the Church continues *Militant*. It will never fall 'till it is succeeded by an *Everlasting Sabbath*. So that when I ask, Whether the *Seventh division of time* be *Moral*, I do not mean, whether it be *Moral*, or *Ceremonial*,

Ceremonial, for *Ceremonial* most certainly it is not, that is, not *Typical*, or not *Typically Ceremonial*, for I sometimes distinguish between a *Type*, and a *Ceremony*. *gally*. And *Lastly*, *Moral* is sometimes opposed to *Positive*, and it is in this sense of the word that I intend the question, Whether the *Seventh part of time be moral*. In short; When I enquire whether the *Seventh division of time be moral*, I mean not whether it be *moral or immoral*; I mean not whether it be *Moral or Ceremonial*; but whether it be *Moral or Positive*. Now in order to satisfy this enquiry, it is absolutely necessary that we have a clear and full *Idea* what these two words **MORAL & POSITIVE** mean. I shall here therefore offer to you some Rules and Maxims, to discover the difference between a merely *moral*, and a *Positive* Precept, with which we may compare the Sanctification of the *Seventh part of time*, and see to which of these two it belongs. But before hand I think it convenient to assure my Reader, that by *moral* I understand what is strictly and properly so, and is sometimes for distinction called by Casuists *Moral-Natural*; and that, if he intends no more than that the Sabbath is *Moral-Positive*, as was the Opinion of the famous *Rever*, and other Learned Orthodox *Sabbatarians*, I have no controversy with him, as will be more clearly manifest in the sequel. Wherefore, —

1. A *Positive* Precept is that which flows from the *Will*, a *Moral* Precept is that which flows from the *Nature* of God. A *Positive* Precept does so intirely depend on the free despotick *Will* of God, that he might have commanded it or not; he might have commanded it, or the contrary consistently with the honour of his Wisdom, Justice, Truth, and all his Attributes. To Exemplify this, The great God, when he commanded the Jews to Sacrifice, might have commanded them, or have forbidden them at his free, & arbitrary pleasure. So under the Gospel, instead of enjoining us these two Sacraments which we now enjoy, *Baptism*, and the *Lord's Supper*, he might either have commanded

us none, or any other in the room of these, and all this without any derogation from the honour of his Attributes. I confess, I have here illustrated a *Positive Precept* by examples that are *Ceremonial* and *Symbolical*. But let it be observed that altho' every *Positive Precept* is not presently *Ceremonial*, yet every *Ceremonial* one is *Positive*; and consequently the instances given, if otherwise apt and pertinent, will be sufficiently conclusive. Nevertheless if a purely *Positive Precept* be required, Take that *Of raising up Seed to the deceased Brother*: * which God commanded to support the fame and honour of the Jewish Nation, and therefore might also have omitted it if he had so in his infinite Wisdom thought fit. This then is the nature of a *Positive Precept*. But now a *Moral* one is just the *reverse*, God could not but have commanded it, and if he had commanded the contrary, it would have been an infinite stain, and blemish to his unspotted purity. This will appear by briefly running over all the commands of the Decalogue, the fourth only excepted. If God instead of commanding us to have an inward Veneration for his Sacred Majesty, as in the first commandment of the Decalogue, had bid us despise, and contemn him; If instead of forbidding us the Worship of graven Images, as in the second, he had bid us bow down to Stocks and Stones, and adore the works of our own hands; instead of commanding us to reverence in the third, he had bid us malign and blaspheme his awful and tremendous Name; instead of honouring in the fifth, reproach our civil and natural Parents; instead of forbidding Murder, had commanded us to destroy our Neighbour in the sixth command; to violate his bed in the seventh; to purloyn his goods in the eighth; to calumniate, and bear false witness against him, in the ninth; and to covet his Wife and Estate, in the tenth; I say, if God had thus framed the Decalogue, or any part of it, would it not have been injurious to his Sacred Majesty? Yes, to the last degree!

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* Deut. 25. in init.

He would not then have been that Wise, Holy, and Righteous God, which he now is. The whole System of our Religion would have *fallen*, and all the Divine Attributes been lost, and *buried* in the *mighty Ruins*. And now to compare the Observation of the seventh part of time with this rule; If God had not commanded just precisely the seventh part, would it have been derogatory to his Name? would he not have been the same holy God, which he now is? if he would, then by this rule, the Precept is not strictly *Moral*. On the contrary; might he not have commanded the *Sixth* or the *Eighth* division of time, as well as the *Seventh*? if he might, then by this rule the Precept is *Positive*. Reader, I shall determine nothing in this matter, but submit it intirely to your judicious censure.

2. *Moral* Precepts are discoverable by the *light of Nature*, *Positive* Precepts cannot be known without the *Assistance of Revelation*. For who of old could ever know by the bare force, and light of reason, that it was his duty to Circumcise every Male of his Family just on the *Eighth* day after his birth? Or whom under the Gospel did unassisted reason ever teach to wash his Infants with Water, or to sit down, and eat bread, and drink wine in commemoration of his Lord? These therefore are *Positive* Precepts, and being founded in the Arbitrary will, and Sovereign pleasure of God, can not be known, but by inspiration from him. Nothing but what is essentially and evidently founded in reason, can be discover'd by the powers of reason. Whereas now a *Moral* Precept is *evident* by the *Light of Nature*. *Ex lumine naturae innotescit*. As the best *Civilians* define it. For as there are in Philosophy self-evident principles received by all Mankind without previous discourse: as that *three and two make five*, and those Propositions of *Euclid* known to Learned men; So there are also in Moral Philosophy and Ethics maxims of eternal and immutable truth. The distinction, between moral *Good* and *Evil* is founded in the Nature of God himself, and

you may as soon mingle Heaven and Earth, and blend together light and Darknes, as confound these two. Men know by nature the Essential difference between good and evil. The Heathen Philosophers have taught the principal Articles of the Moral Law, in their books of Morality, and that in their most refined, and exalted sense. The Curious, or Incredulous may consult the incomparable *Hugo Grotius de veritate Religionis Christianae*, where they will find satisfactory demonstration. And this a greater than he, the Apostle Paul plainly teaches us. For, says he, *when the Gentiles do by nature the things contained in the Law, these having no law, are a Law to themselves.** Here I would take leave to observe that our English translation does so vary from the Original, as to carry the sense differently from what the Apostle intends. For we are not to imagine he means that the Heathen World can by the powers of nature perform the things, which the Law requires. This is diametrically opposite to that doctrine of free Grace, which this great Apostle presses with so much warmth, and vigour in all his Letters to the Churches. Nor indeed does he say so. The original words are *ta tou nomou quae sunt legis*, as the vulgar Version very well reads it: *i. e. the things which belong to the Law*, or the office and duty of the Law; now what is that, but to prescribe to us our duty? *Facienda, et fugienda*; which admirably agrees with the following Words: *are a Law unto themselves.* The sum is: there is a Law in every man's breast, which dictates to him his Moral duty. And now it is high time to compare the celebration of one day in Seven with this rule. Is it knowable by the light of Nature? Did any Heathen Moralist ever dream of it? Could unassisted nature ever teach any man that just the Seventh division of his time, neither more nor less must be consecrated to the Service of God? I may challenge my Reader in the words of King Solomon: *What is that Man's Name, and what is his Son's name? canst thou tell?*

till? Nevertheless if we could trace some obscure foot-
 steps of a *Seventh Sacred day* in the Writings of the Hen-
 then Moralists, yet why might they not be deriv'd
 from Adam founded on the History of the Creation,
 since we are sure they came by Sacrifices, and several
 other Positive Laws the same way? As I have discours'd
 at large in a Latin treatise on this Subject. Neither
 could Adam in Paradise by the bare light of Nature
 have known it, unless he could by the same light of
 nature discover the order of the Creation, upon which
 the Sanctification of the Seventh day was founded. And
 how he should do that, unless God was necessitated by
 nature to Create the World in six days, I cannot under-
 stand. Nor let it be excepted here, as I find it is by
 some Learned men, that altho' reason does not prima-
 rily teach us this doctrine, yet it reaches us to Acquiesce
 in it when revealed, and to subscribe to the equity of it.
 This reasoning is inconsequent. And if it be admitted,
 the distinction between *Moral*, *Judicial* and *Ceremonial*
 will immediately fall. For the Great God has made
 all his works, and given all his laws in infinite Wisdom,
 and consequently we are obliged in reason to subscribe
 to the equity of them; But can we thence argue that
 the Ceremonial and Judicial Laws are Moral? Once
 more, — *And lastly*. There is this further difference
 between a *Moral* and *Positive* Precept, that a *Positive*
 Precept may on certain occasions be *dispensed* with, a
Moral never can. It is an approved, and confessed max-
 im among Casuists, that a *Positive* Precept must give
 way when it interferes with a *Moral* one. So of old in
 the case of *Circumcision*, that the *Eighth* day rather than
 any other should be appointed for that *Sacramental* ope-
 ration, was purely *Positive*; and therefore it was sus-
 pended for the space of Forty years in the Wilderness,
 when it interfer'd with the Law of *Mercy*. For *Cir-*
cumcision was a *painful* and *bloody* rite, and so not fit
 for men or children in travelling circumstances. But
 now

now a Moral law admits of no dispensation. God, 'tis true, who is the Sovereign and Arbitrary Law-giver may dispense with them, though indeed that is not properly a Dispensation. As of old he commanded *Abraham* to Sacrifice his Son *Isaac*, contrary to the sixth command. And the Israelites to borrow the Egyptians Jewels without a design to repay, *seemingly* repugnant to the eighth. And again, *Leviratic* Marriages contrary to the seventh. But men may not imitate these Examples on any pretext whatsoever. We may not blaspheme God, speak falsely, shed innocent blood, or the like, to gain the whole World: Nay we might not commit these Crimes, tho' we could thereby accidentally do glorious Service for God and his Church. 'Tis an unerring rule: *Evil may not be done, that Good may come of it.* But now will the command of Celebrating one day in Seven come up to this rule? May not that be suspended on any occasion whatsoever? On the contrary, don't the best Casuists teach us in their Writings, and the best Christians in their practice that in cases of *Necessity* and *Mercy*, we may omit Divine Worship on that holy day. And therefore by this rule also it cannot be a *Moral-natural* Precept. Nor will it avail here to say that Affirmative Precepts do not bind *ad semper*, and so there is no dispensation here. For I reply; true indeed Affirmative Precepts, such as the *fifth* command, which are indefinite as to time, do not oblige *ad semper*; It would be absurd to say they did; But those Affirmative Precepts which limit a certain space of time, as this of the *fourth* command does, oblige *ad semper* so far as they command, and consequently have the force of a *Negative* Precept.

I might further go on to argue this point from the nature of time, which being but a circumstance no more admits of *Moral right*, than place. But I must restrain myself within bounds. I shall make one or two remarks upon the whole, and then hasten forwards.

1. I cannot but think upon the most mature and impartial

partial deliberation, that the rules and maxims which I have here offer'd for the tryal of a *Moral* and *Positive* Precept are very just and fair: At least they are such as are given us by the best Civilians of former, & latter Ages. As *Aristotle*, *Cicero*, *Selden* and *Grotius*, with many others whom I might mention. And *these* exactly consent with the Ancient Fathers of the *Greek* and *Latin* Churches, most of whom I consulted on this occasion, when I had leisure, and opportunity in *Holland*. Besides, I have diligently compared them, as you have seen, with the other nine *Words* of the Decalogue, and they seem exactly to agree. However after all I shall readily, and cheartfully embrace clearer light, when it is offered; for tho' I may be *erroneous*, yet I will not be *tenacious*.

2. If these rules for the distinguishing a *Moral*, and *Positive* Precept are not just and true, then it will follow that I am mistaken in the meaning of those two words, and that's all the consequence that can fairly be deduced from it. For I desire it may be carefully noted, that which way soever this controversy be decided, it is but a Verbal dispute, a *Philological*, not a *Theological* debate, and therefore there can be no injury done to the Sanctification of the Sabbath. It is a quarrel about the word *Moral*; if they admit my notion, and sense of the Word, the Sabbath cannot be purely *Moral*; If some other's may be admitted, then I own it is: Where therefore lies the great importance of this question? For whether God has commanded us to observe the Sabbath by the *light of Nature*, or by an *immediate voice from Heaven*, yet it still stands equally firm and sure, and will abide as long as the Sun and Moon endures. Not all the men in the World can make any alteration in it. If an *Oecumenical* Council could be gather'd, and that numerous Assembly should without one dissenting Vote, pass a decree for the *abolition*, or *change* of the Sabbath, it would be unpardonable presumption. Therefore I am far from agreeing with that famous Reformer *Calvin*, when he says: *Neque enim Ecclesias damnare*, &c. &c.

Sec. *Non* will I condemn those Churches who appoint other days for their Public Assemblies instead of the Sabbath, provided it be done without Superstition. On the contrary, I believe that great good Man was herein an Eminent Instance of humane frailty; and am apt to think that God in his infinite Wisdom suffers such shining Lights to be stain'd, for the same reason that he has Created Spots in the Sun, to teach the World not to Adore it.

But it will be said; this is all true; yet does not it cast some *sur*, some contempt on the Sabbath, which should be treated with all possible reverence, to dispute its Morality? And I answer no, not at all; not in the least measure. For I demand, is there a more solemn and tremendous Mystery in our holy Religion, then the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper? And yet will any man say I cast a *sur* or contempt upon it, if I say it is a *Positive*, not a *Moral* Precept, which every ignorant Christian knows? Or will any man approach with the less reverence to that holy Ordinance, because it has pleased God not to communicate it to him by the light of nature, but the Ministry of his Son, and his Apostles? And is it not equally a perverse humour to pay the less reverence to God's holy Sabbaths, because he has enjoined as the observation of them by his *Express* and *Positive* commands?

But I foresee it will be further Objected. Ifn't the Sabbath at all *Moral*? How then comes it to be a Branch of the Moral Law, and so at least to be *locally* Moral? To which I reply: If the Sabbath were totally *Positive*, yet its great importance to the Jews was sufficient to vindicate it a place in the Decalogue. The Jews have always been from times immemorial surrounded with Idolatrous Neighbours, who worshipped some of them the Sun, Moon, and Stars, and all the Host of Heaven; while others bowed down to the gods of Silver, of Gold, and of Brass, of Wood, of Iron, and of Stone, and prais'd the

the Works of their own hands. And the Israelitish Nation were too prone to imitate this accursed Idolatry, especially in the early Ages of the World, as is apparent from that single instance of the Golden Calf. Now there could not be a more admirable Means to prevent such a fatal Apostacy, than the Observation of the Sabbath. For this day was a Memorial of God's creating the *Sun*, and *Moon*, and whatever else was worship'd as Gods by the Nations; and consequently while they diligently observed the Sabbath, and so preserv'd the Memory of the Creation fresh in their minds, it was Morally impossible they should be so stupid as to turn Idolaters. Wherefore seeing this Precept was of last Moment, and Consequence to the Jewish Nation, tho' it were purely Positive, yet this is reason enough why it was proclaimed with so much terror and solemnity from Mount Sinai with the Moral Law, and by the Great God himself registred on Tables of Stone. But,

2. I freely own, and contend for it, that the Sabbath is *partly* Moral, tho' not *intirely* so. When I say the Sabbath is not Moral, I mean only it is not *Moral-Natural*; and when I say it is Positive, I intend it is *Moral-Positive*: *i. e.* I mean what some men do, that use this distinction, tho' I confess, such is my dulness, I could never penetrate into the propriety of it, for it appears to me a contradiction *in adjecto*. There is this in the Sabbath Moral, and Eternally obligatory by the *light of Nature*, that a convenient portion of our time should be devoted *wholly* to Divine Service. Our reason teaches us firstly that God is the Creator of all things. Whether we lift up our faces to the Firmament, and behold the *Constant regular* motions of the Heavens, their *amazing* beauty and harmony, or look down on the flowers of the Field; Whether we take a view of the Fabrick of our Bodies, and see how *fearfully* and surprizingly we are made, or consider that *Rational Immortal* Spirit that lodges in them; In short, which way soever we turn our Eyes, every thing confesses there is an infinitely

Wise Being, the Contriver and Creator of all. And then sure the next step is, that we should make some suitable returns to our Almighty Creator and Benefactor, by devoting part of our time to *Hymn* his Praises. This the Pagan Philosophers taught, and this they practis'd. The *Athenian* laws provided, that on their holy days there should be no * *Assemblies* but such as were gather'd for the *Worship* of the gods. The *Roman* laws did the like, as *Cicero* will tell you. And in † *Macrobius* the Priests affirm their *Festivals* were polluted if any work was done on them, and therefore before their Sacred Processions sent their Servants to forbid all Persons their Servile works. But the clearest and fullest instance of all is what we meet with in that old Geographer *Strabo*, who says expressly. *It is the Custom both of Grecians and Barbarians* (that is of the whole world, for the Greeks modestly called all mankind *Barbarians* but themselves) *to perform their Sacred rites with a Solemn intermission of labour; and this NATURE it self teaches.* This then is built on the law of Nature, that a convenient part of our time must be consecrated to Divine Service. But as to the exact proportion which is due, the Law of Nature is silent; And God never intended to submit so high a point to the Arbitrary pleasure of men. But as a Wise and Prudent Householder cuts out what proportion of Service he thinks fit to exact from his own Servants; so the Great God deals with us; He has allowed us Six parts of time for our selves and demanded only the *Seventh* for his own Service, which we must for ever keep holy to him. And happy were it for the World, if the Pious observation of this *Sabbath* were as famous

* *Lex. Athen. Ne habeatur concio de aliis rebus, quam iis quae ad fessorum religionem pertinent.*

† *Feriae polluuntur, quoties iis indictis, conceptisque opus aliquod fiat. quapropter sacerdotes praemittebant famulos, ut monerent operarios ab operando quiescere, ne pro negotio suo Deorum Cere-
monias attaminaret. Macrobi. Saturn. Lib. I. c. 16. Serv.
Honor. in Virg.*

famous and universal as its Name; which, bating the various idioms proper to every dialect, is the same in almost all Languages, whether Eastern, or Western, Ancient or Modern. A Specimen of which the Inquisitive Reader may view in the Margent. But,

Is it called? *3dly.* How, and in what manner are we to keep holy the Sabbath Day? To which I answer in General, We must do it by carefully abstaining from Some Works, and by diligently employing ourselves in Others. If we would Sanctify the Sabbath, there are some Works which we must refrain As,

1. The Common and Servile Works of our Ordinary Callings and Vocations. So the command runs expressly—*In it thou shalt not do any work.* The Jews were strictly prohibited by God from buying or selling on the Sabbath Day. And the Pharisees proceeded to a point further, and forbid them carrying Money about with them on that day, for fear least the force of the temptation might unawares surprize them into the Sin. This carries in it at the first blush an appearance of exalted Piety; but if we consider the censorious pride of the men, and compare it with innumerable other Superstitious fooleries, which they added to the Divine Law, and thereby made it insupportably heavy, we shall see reason to alter our sentiments, and conclude it to be exactly of a piece with the works of Super-eragation pretended to by the Popish Priests of our age their true and genuine Successors. However all was not enough to restrain the *Worldly Jews*; but they would be openly trafficking with their Neighbours the *Tyrrians* on the Sabbath Day. The Sight of which transported *Nebe-*

miah into just Indignation : * *I contended*, says he, *with the Nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What Evil is this you do, and prophane the Sabbath?* Now God so strictly requires this external rest, and cessation from Labour, not because it has any *intrinsic* Goodness in it, or is, properly speaking, any Part of his Worship and Service ; but because the Cares of the World distract our Minds, and discompose that heavenly Frame of Spirit, that divine Temper of Soul, which is absolutely necessary for the right Discharge of these religious Duties. For so narrow and contracted are our Minds, that we cannot attend to Things so remote and distant as *Civil* and *Sacred* at the same Time. And therefore this is the *first*, tho' not the *primary* Thing to be regarded by us in the Sanctification of the Sabbath, that we desist from our *Worldly Employments*, and banish all *Earthly Cares* out of our Breasts.

2. If we would keep *holy* the Sabbath-day, we must forbear those *Pleasures* and *Recreations* which are lawful and innocent on other Days. 'Tis strange to see how zealously some learned Men contend for the Indulgence of *Sports* and *Pastimes* on the Lord's-Day, in direct Contrariety to the Prophet *Isaiah* : † *If thou turn away thy Foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy Pleasure on my holy Day ;* and again in the End of the same Verse : *Not doing thine own Ways, nor finding thine own Pleasure, nor speaking thine own Words, &c.* The Prophet speaks fully and emphatically : But these Men twist themselves every Way, and employ all their Wit and Learning to decline the Force and Efficacy of them. They tell you in the first Place ; that the Word here translated *Pleasure*, does sometimes denote *Purpose*, and that this Word is capable of a very different Sense. But lest this should not do, they say further that the Prophet means only Pleasure in *Excess*, not those moderate *Recreations* which are both innocent and useful on the *Lord's-day*. And then after all, they have yet another

Reserve ;

Reserve ; They tell you that the *Chaldee Paraphrase*, and *Seventy-two* Interpreters unanimously understand by the Word *Pleasure*, the Pleasure of *Gain*, and so nothing is forbidden here but *Traffick* and *Merchandize*. And now tho' these Things were all very true, yet they are at least *unseasonably* said in this degenerate Age, when Religion does so apparently languish, and many cast open Scorn and Contempt on this *Sacred Day*. Nevertheless, I can yet see no Reason why we should give over this Text for lost : On the contrary, it may be easily vindicated from these false glosses. For *first*, as to the Hebrew Word's signifying sometimes *Purpose* ; 'tis true it does so, but very *rarely*, and that is no concluding Argument that it must be so interpreted here. And yet if it were, I suppose *Purpose* may as well signify *Pleasure* as *Gain*. Nextly ; in vain would they *mollify* the Propbet's Words, and make him mean only *Pleasure in Excess*, when he simply says *Pleasure*. This is asserted without any argument to support it, and so may be with the same Ease denied, as it is affirmed. Besides, if we read over the whole Verse impartially, it will appear that the Words will not admit such a *soft* and *tender* Interpretation. The Propbet is very strict and severe ; he takes a great Compass to express himself ; forbidding us to *do our own Pleasure*, to *find our own Pleasure*, to *do our own Ways*, nay, and to *speak our own Words*. Who that is unbiassed can imagine the Design of all this is only to prohibit *excessive* Pleasures, which are morally Evil, and therefore unlawful on *other Days*. Lastly, as to the *Chaldee Paraphrase*, and *Seventy two* interpreters ; Learned men know they have in hundreds of places varied from the Original ; sometimes they did it designedly to hide the *Mysteries* of their Religion from the Heathen nations, but oftner through inadvertency : as *Lightfoot*, and others versed in the *Rabbi's* have clearly demonstrated. But yet neither do these Interpreters understand by the word, pleasure of *gain*, unless my eyes deceive me. The *Chaldee Paraphrase* renders it *necessaria*.

feria tua, and the Seventy *ta Theleemata sou*, i.e. *Voluntates tuas*, which can't be better translated than it is in our English version, *thy pleasure*. The short therefore is, We must on the Lord's-day refrain from the *Pastimes*, as well as the *care*, from the *pleasures*, as well as the *business* of Life. For tho' recreations are very well consistent with the rest from labour enjoined us, yet they are very inconsistent with that Spiritual work and business in which we should exercise our selves. And it is a certain truth that *Spiritual idleness* is as great an evil as *Bodily labour* on the Lord's-day. For

2. There are some works in which we *may* and *ought* to be diligently employed on the Lord's-day. They may be all rank'd under three heads.

Works of { *Necessity,*
Charity,
and
Piety.

1. Works that are *Necessary*, or greatly convenient may be lawfully done on the Lord's-day. We may extinguish a raging fire, when it has inflam'd our Neighbour's House, or our own. We may save a labouring Ship from Wrecking in a Tempest, or prevent any other notorious detriment to our Persons or Estates. We may also take up Arms, and fight in the defence of our selves, or our Country, and all this without any violation of the day. Indeed *Josephus* * tells us that the Ancient Jews were so foolishly Superstitious, as to permit *Antiochus* with hostile forces to invade and destroy their Country without holding up a finger against him; because it was on their *Sabbath-day*. But *Mithridates* their chief Ruler afterwards when it was too late convinc'd them of their unreasonable Scrupulosity. And then also the works of *great convenience* may lawfully be done on this day. For I cannot believe (and I find *Dr. Twiss*, with other Orthodox *Sabbatarians*, are of the same mind) that we under the Gospel are tyed up to

* *Josep. Antiq. Jud. Lib. 12. Pag. 411.*

to all the rigours that the Ancient Jews were by the Divine Law, much less to those ridiculous Superstitions, which they themselves superadded. It was not permitted the Jews of old to *kindle a fire, to prepare meat, to stir out of their places, or perfume the dead on the Sabbath day*; ‡ which things nevertheless are universally practised by the Christian World, and esteem'd not only lawful, but expedient, and some of them becoming such a joyful Festival as the Christian Sabbath. However, I must enter this caution, that we ought not unnecessarily to procrastinate works, which might have well enough been done the preceding day, and then afterwards plead necessity or convenience.

2. There are works of *Charity and Mercy*; in which we not only *may*, but *ought* diligently to exercise our selves, when opportunity presents, on the *Lord's-day*. The Christian Sabbath was instituted as a Memorial of God's great and unexampled kindness to Mankind: And therefore the works of Charity and Mercy do extraordinarily well become this day. Charity to *Men*, and Mercy even to the *brute Beasts*: So our Lord Expounded with the Jews of his time: * *What man shall there be among you, that shall have one Sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath-day, will not lay hold of it and lift it out?* How much more then may we lawfully, nay and laudably do charitable Offices to men, who are our fellow Creatures, and bear the Image of God? Agreeably our Saviour in the days of his flesh went about not only saving the Souls, but healing the bodies of the Sick † on this day. And particularly once when our Saviour had cured a crooked woman, tho' a sad object of pity, having been distorted in her joints for eighteen years, yet one of the haughty supercilious Pharisees (it seems by the Story he was the Ruler of a Synagogue) comes up and challenges our innocent Lord as if he had violated the *Sacred day*. But He justifies the fact, and gives him a smart reprimand: *Thou Hypocrite!* Hence also the Primitive Christians made it one essential duty of the

‡ Exod. 35. 3. ibid. 16. 29. — * Matt. 12. 11. — † Luk. 13. 13, 14, 15.

the Lord's-day to collect supplies for the Sick and Poor. Nor is it to be admir'd that men should choose to be found doing deeds of Charity on the Lord's-day, since this will be one grand Article by which they must be Judged at the Last-day. You may read the whole process in the 25th of Matt. Where the Judge says, *I was an Hungry, and ye gave me no meat; thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; naked, and ye clothed me not, &c.* — *Wherefore go away into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels.*

3dly. And Lastly. If we would keep holy the Sabbath-day, we must then be sedulously employed in the Works of Piety. They are egregiously mistaken, who imagine they have nothing else to do on this Day of rest, but to go dozing about with folded arms, or sit still in their chairs, free from all exercise of body, or mind. This was the gross folly of the Ancient Jews, which expos'd both them, and their Religion to the Sarcastical * Jeers of the Heathen Nations. Time in general is the most valuable thing in the World, and therefore the fleeting moments of it were by some of the Roman Poets elegantly compared to *Golden Sands*: But now this Sacred time is infinitely more precious, and consequently every moment of it should be filled up with Piety and Devotion. It is an imperfect representation of the Heavenly Sabbath, which is all spent in rapturous Praises. The Seraphick Angels, and blessed Spirits never cease day or night giving blessing and honour to him that lives for ever and ever. And even thus ought the Sabbath to be spent on Earth. We should arise in the Morning with the *Earliest Bird*, and Salute the coming day, as the Angel Gabriel greeted the Mother of our Lord, with a little alteration: *Hail Sacred day! thou art highly favour'd, the Lord is with thee, and blessed art thou among days.* And then the next thing is to apply our selves with alacrity to the great duties of the day, which may be comprehended under three heads.

Publick,

* *Septima quaeque dies turpi damnata veterno, Tanquam lassati mollis imago Dei.* — Rat. Claud. Itiner. Lib. I.

*Publick,
Private, and
Secret.*

By *Publick* duties I intend the Solemn Worship of God in his House. The Ancient Jews not only had their Temple at *Jerusalem*, where they, or their *Stationary* men, met three times in a year for the more august performance of Divine Worship, but they also erected Synagogues in their several Cities, and Villages, where they met to read the Law every Sabbath-day; and this has been the practice of the Christian Church in all Ages. Now this solemn Worship of God in his house ought to be performed by us in every part of it, with profound reverence and devotion. We should spend some part of the Morning of this Sacred day in getting our Souls into a serious, composed, heavenly frame, in preparing our hearts after the *Preparation of the Sanctuary*. And when the time approaches, when we hear the *Joyful Sound* warning us to the house of God, we should fall into deep, and serious Meditation whether, and into whose presence we are going. We should consider that we are going to appear, not before an Earthly Sovereign, tho' even that would strike us with awe and confusion, but before the Supreme and dread Majesty of Heaven and Earth; and that, many of us too not as friends, and favourites, but as Criminals and Delinquents, professed Enemies and Rebels to his Crown and Dignity. And therefore tho' we are commanded to *enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his Courts with Praise*, yet it must be mixt with awful fear and reverence, evermore remembering the counsel of the Wise man; *Keep thy foot when thou comest into the house of God*: that is, strip thy affections, which are the feet of the Soul, of all that dirt, and filth they have contracted; discard all earthly thoughts from thy breast, behave thyself with that Godly awe and reverence which belongs unto that great Majesty in whose presence thou art. And as soon as we are got into the Temple, and

are seated in our places, we should say as *Jacob* did at *Bethel*: *This is God's house! How dreadful, how awful is this place! Surely God is here! This is no other than the House of God! And these are the gates of Heaven!* We should therefore during all the time of Divine Service, get our Souls deeply engaged, for God is a *Spirit* and will be worship'd in *Spirit* and in *Truth*. Though our hearts may be often welcome without our bodies, yet our bodies can never be grateful without our hearts. Nor is it sufficient that our hearts attend on God, unless they bring with 'em that *Purity* and *Holiness*, which becomes his house for ever. And here one would think there should be very little need of persuasive argument to engage us to this duty, if we did but consider on the one hand the Majesty of our dread, and awful Creator, whom we address; or on the other hand, the infinite importance of the errand, and message which we are come upon before him, to which if the Great God don't vouchsafe an answer of Peace, we are ruin'd and undone for evermore. Thus ought we to behave our selves in the house of God.

Again, There are Private Religious Services incumbent on all of us upon this holy day. When we go from God's house to our own, we must not think the business of the day is over; 'tis our duty to recollect what we have heard, to entertain one another with heavenly discourse, and the whole Family should with united devotion still carry on Divine Worship.

Lastly, There are secret duties, which challenge a great part of this Sacred Time, such as *Prayer* and *Praise*, but more especially **DIVINE CONTEMPLATION**. We should retire every one of us into our several Apartments, and there exercise our selves in the heavenly Art of Meditation, till we have got above the World, and are as it were *lost* and *dead* to every Thing here below. Our holy Religion affords us such a large Field for Meditation, as were enough to exhaust all our Time, tho' we should live to see a hundred

dred Years, and every Day were a Sabbath. We may *Meditate* on the great Creator of the World in the Three Sacred Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and on his glorious Attributes. We should *Meditate* on the mysterious Mazes of Divine Providence, on the Vanity and Inconstancy of all Worldly Things, on the Mortality of our Bodies, and the Immortality of our Souls, on the Awfulness of the last Judgment, on the inexpressible Joys of Heaven, and the insupportable Horrors of Hell. But above all, our Souls should be ravish'd away in deep Contemplation of the wondrous Love of our dying Lord, who descended into the Grave for us, and rose again, in Memory of whose Resurrection and Triumph over Death and Hell, we celebrate this Day. Thus we should sit *Musing* 'till our Hearts are warmed, 'till the Fire burn and glow in our Breasts, and like the Apostle *John* in the desolate Isle of *Patmos*, we are wrapt up in the Spirit on the Lord's-day.

4thly. The last Enquiry is, Wherein lies the great Importance of this Duty of Sanctifying the Sabbath, Which I shall dispatch in two Propositions, and so finish.

1. God has promised the greatest Blessings upon the due Sanctification of the Sabbath, and denounced the most heavy and tremendous Judgments on the Violation of it. It is promised: * *Call the Sabbath a Delight and I will cause thee to ride on the high Places of the Earth. i. e. I will bring thee into Canaan, a Land flowing with all the blessings of the Earth. And in Jerem. 17. 24, 25. And it shall come to pass, if ye diligently hearken unto me, saith the Lord, to hallow my Sabbath, and do no work therein; then shall there enter in at the gates of this City Kings and Princes sitting on the throne of David, riding in Chariots, and on Horses— and this City shall remain for ever.* Spiritual blessings are also entail'd on the diligent Sanctifier of the Sabbath. The Great God promises to those, who keep his Sabbaths, that he will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off:

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that he will bring them into his holy Mountain, and make them joyful in his house of Prayer. † But now on the other part, the most heavy and tremendous judgments are denounced against those who contemn, and violate this Sacred day. *Nehemiah* could tell the Jews of old that they brought *Fierce Wrath upon Israel by prophaning the Sabbath. Upon Israel*; upon the whole body and nation of the Jews. For when Sabbath-breaking grows Epidemical, the Great God does not satisfy himself with revenging it upon the more heinous transgressors, but his wrath kindles and burns against the whole Nation and Kingdom, and the most flourishing Cities in them: What says the Lord by his Servant *Jeremiah*? *If you will not hearken to me to hallow the Sabbath-day, then will I kindle a fire in the gates of Jerusalem, and it shall devour the palaces thereof, and it shall not be quenched.* A very sad, and severe commination! Fire is a terrible calamity, and it must be understood here *figuratively*, as well as *properly*, and so it is often put in Scripture to signify the most astonishing Plagues that are sent from Heaven to punish an obstinately sinful World. Of this *fire* the Prophet says, *it shall enter in at the gates of the City.* The Gates were the security and defence of the place, where they mounted their artillery, and also the tribunal of the Civil Rulers, where they sat in Judgment. So that the meaning is, God will send them such a sweeping Judgment, as shall at once deprive them of all their Civil Rights and Liberties, and leave them naked to the invasion of their bitterest Enemies. (*And it shall devour the palaces thereof.*) i. e. it shall lay waste all the beauty, ornament, and glory of Jerusalem. And then lastly to compleat, and wind up the Curse, it is threatned: *this fire shall not be quenched.* The fire shall rage till it has consum'd all to ashes; The Angry God will not sheath his avenging Sword, till he has made it *drunk* in their blood. He will not remove his hand, till he has utterly destroy'd them? If then these Judgments are so heavy, when they fall on Kingdoms, and

† Isa. 56. 5. 7.

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Cities, how insupportable must they be to particular Persons? how can our hands endure and our hearts bear up under them? If the great Saviour of the World, who is also to be the Judge of it, should come to Judgment on his own day, (as was the opinion of *Austin*,† and is indeed not improbable) and should surprize us in the actual contempt and violation of his day, how would this circumstance add infinitely to the terror of his appearance? What other treatment could we expect from him, than that since we will not *rest* on his holy day, he should give us our portion with those of whom we read *the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they REST not day or night.* *

2dly. And Finally. The Devout Sanctification of the Sabbath is a most excellent means to prepare us for Eternal Blessedness. And therefore it must needs be of highest and last consequence to Mankind. The cares of this World, the riches, honours, and pleasures of it do so engross our time and thoughts, that were it not for the constant returns of the Lord's-day, Religion would sensibly languish, and in a short time expire out of the World. We cannot therefore be sufficiently sensible how infinitely we are engaged to the God of all grace, and Father of mercies, that he has appropriated one Day in seven to his own immediate Service. He knows our earthly frames, He sees how apt we are to be lost and buried in the tumultuous cares of this Life, and while we are anxiously providing for our Bodies, to neglect the great affairs and business of our Immortal Souls, and therefore has Sanctified the seventh part of our time, whereon we may suspend the mean, and base employments of this Life, banish all earthly cares out of our breasts, and fix our affections on the important concerns of another World. And then this false, flattering World is not the only Enemy we have to encounter with; The Angels of Hell, who are many in number, mighty in strength, set themselves in battle array against us. They go about
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† *Aust. Serm. de temp.* 159.

* *Rev.* 14. 11.

like ravenous Wolves, or as the Scripture phrases it, like *roaring Lions*, seeking to devour our precious Souls. For which reason the Life of a Christian is very justly and elegantly styl'd a *Warfaring State*. Now the Apostle Paul tells his Son *Timothy*: * *No man that Warreth, entangles himself with the affairs of this Life.* How! Does not the Warrior entangle himself with the affairs of this Life? Ah then! what miserable, raw, and undisciplin'd Soldiers should we be, if we were wholly immerst in the affairs of this Life, if we had not *one Day in Seven* to retire into the field, to try on our Christian Armour, to handle our Spiritual Weapons, and put our selves into a Posture of defence against such *Watchful* and *Ghostly* enemies. This is the *time*, when we may most reasonably expect by the Assistance of Almighty grace to foil Satan, that *sworn Enemy* of our Souls. It being the very day, wherein our Great Lord and Master, the Captain of our Salvation gain'd a glorious triumph over him. Hence it is become the great Market day for Souls. It has been the birth-day of many Spiritual Kings, and Princes. The Psalmist says of Zion: † *And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her.* But of this glorious day, the fairest of all the daughters of time, it shall be said: Myriads of Souls have had a new, and Spiritual birth therein. Ah then! what miserable Sinners are they who say of the Sabbath in their retired thoughts, *What a weariness is it? When will it be over, that we may set forth Wheat?* Ah brutish Souls; *Curvae in terras Animae!* Nothing but this gross Earth will satisfy them. They are stupid and dead to all refined Spiritual enjoyments. If such men as these were with the great Doctor of the Nations rapt up into the third Heaven, they would like the Spies of Canaan, bring down an *evil report* of those regions of bliss. Place them in the centre of Heaven, and they would feel the unutterable torments of hell. How wretched must these men be! The thoughts of going down to the place
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* 2 Tim. 2. 4.

† Psal. 87. 5.

of torments must needs be intollerable ; and yet the Meditation of Heaven is equally dreadful. For if a Sabbath of a few hours on earth is such an insupportable weariness, what must an everlasting Sabbath in Heaven be ? If they can't bear to spend one day in Praising God, how will they spend innumerable Millions of ages in that delightful employment ? Wherefore to shut up all, we must accustom our selves to Sanctify God's holy day on earth with pleasure and delight, and this will raise us above the World, and by degrees prepare us for that Eternal Sabbath, when we shall continually give blessing, honour, and praise to him, that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.

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